

Typhoon Soudelor Situation Report 4 August 2015 1900 (Pacific)

Declaration/Activation/Case Status: 1 rotating EPA staff deployed to FEMA RRCC ESF 10 Desk for 24 hour shift ; No MAs issued to date; Gov CNMI submitted declaration request 8/4; FEMA review pends; OSTLF FPN open for Typhoon related Mobil oil spill; 2 OSCs en route to Saipan for OPA response. Details follow

Overview:

On 2 August 2015 (Pacific time) Typhoon Soudelor made landfall at CNMI, directly over Saipan and very near Tinian, as a Category 2 typhoon. Soudelor brought hurricane force winds (near 105mph), heavy rains and coastal inundation. Saipan port open for shipping traffic, subject to CG Safety Zone requirement and as authorized by Captain of the Port. The Harbor has been closed by USCG which is permitting only authorized vessels to move. The airport is open during daylight hours (0600-1800). Although communications with on-island personnel is very intermittent, preliminary indications are of widespread infrastructure damage on both Saipan and Tinian, including downed power poles (approximately 254 on Saipan), lines and transformers, roads blocked by downed trees, damaged buildings.

The power grid on Saipan is down as the roof was blown off from both the CUC control room and generator building; additionally, approximately 45% of the distribution system is estimated to be damaged.

An above-ground storage tank containing gasoline at the Mobil Micronesia tank farm was damaged, opening a gash approximately 6 inches above the tank bottom, releasing tank contents into secondary containment. See more detailed discussion below.

A 1000 gallon diesel fuel tank on Saipan's Delta wharf was struck by a derelict vessel and damaged, leaking an estimated 500 gallons of diesel fuel into Tanapag Harbor. Two other derelict vessels are also reported to have landfalled on Saipan. No further description, location or report of actual or potential spill/release available at this time.

The CNMI Governor has reportedly requested an emergency declaration; however it has not yet been granted by FEMA and thus FEMA has not yet issued any mission assignments.

Due to the difference in time zones, the rest of this report includes updates from CNMI current as of the evening of 3 Aug (Pacific) time, or the morning of 4 Aug on CNMI. Also, it is segregated into two parts: updates relating to the Mobil Micronesia Tank Farm Release, activities for which are funded through the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund; and those related to other activities in response to the typhoon, which presumably will be funded as a FEMA mission assignment. Source information is primarily derived from R9 OSC conversations with CUC staff and other Gov CNMI contacts as well as ESF10 and FEMA RRCC desk reports. Communication links are limited in CNMI as is the flow and consistency of information at this time. The following is the best information available at this time. It may change as information channels and assessment quality become better established.

Mobil Micronesia Tank Farm Release:

Tank 10 (230,000 gallon capacity) was impacted by a transportation container causing a 4-6 inch tear in the tank wall and an unknown amount of gasoline was released into secondary containment. Secondary containment is holding and not overtopping from typhoon rain. Oil was released into secondary containment. AFFF foam blanket was used to reduce evaporation, VOCs, benzene, and ignition risk. Mobil Micronesia on scene as responsible party. The Container is still in place but cannot be moved and 2 other containers are in the way.

The Coast Guard Sector Guam has opened the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund to address the Mobil Micronesia gasoline release and the diesel fuel release from the fuel tank on Delta Wharf. Although the release is in the inland zone and thus EPA's responsibility, CG Sector Guam is presently acting as first federal official on scene and OSC for EPA. Region 9 has deployed OSCs Chris Weden and Marty Powell who are in transit as of the time of this report. They are due to arrive on Guam on Wed. 5 August (Pacific) but the timing of their arrival on Saipan is not presently known.

USCG reports that secondary containment is holding and not overtopping from typhoon rain. All the gasoline is out of Tank #10, transferred into Tank #2, and gasoline/water in the containment has been pumped into another tank within the facility. They have also identified a pipe in the tank farm which is damaged. Response work continues but is generally under control.

Other Typhoon-Related Activities:

Updates from CNMI BECQ (DEQ)

Fuel:

The Mobil Bulk Terminal remains closed at this time, due to the damage from the shipping container and safety concerns. Mobil gas stations (except for one being used for emergency vehicles) are closed. CUC's fuel contract is with Mobil.

The IP&E (Shell) Bulk Terminal did not sustain damage to its tanks, however, the loading/unloading rack is damaged and therefore filling tank trucks is an issue. USCG has approved of gravity feeding of the tank trucks, however this is a slow process. Some Shell gas stations are open, however gasoline is being rationed to \$20/vehicle. Diesel is available and not being rationed.

Solid Waste:

A DEQ team conducted an assessment of the two proposed debris sites in Koblerville and Kagman. They are relatively ready to accept debris, although the Kagman site needs some vegetation clearing to be able to be accessible. DEQ is concerned with monitoring of the locations to ensure that only green waste are brought to these sites. The transfer station and the Marpi Landfill are open and accepting waste. Clarification is still needed on what is being done with hazardous waste.

Waste water:

There are two waste water treatment plants on Saipan, Agingan and Sadog Tasi. Agighan is up and running, however yesterday they were down to ¼ tank of fuel. Fuel for the generators is an issue. Sadog Tasi has a generator in need of repair, so while primary treatment (settling) is occurring, no secondary treatment of waste is occurring and untreated waste water is being discharged. Sadog Tasi needs an operating generator and fuel to be functional. A number of the waste water lift stations have back-up generators and are in operation, and others do not have generators and are not operating.

CUC Water:

All of the CUC water wells and the water supply distribution system is offline due to no power. There is some wellhead damage, although they are still assessing. One water holding tank (Kagman) has been damaged. Most of the CUC water tanks are empty. CUC and DEQ are assessing alternatives to get some of the water wells up and operating. DEQ is concerned that if water is put into the distribution system at other than full capacity, that more water will be lost in the system, and will not get to the end user. DEQ and CUC are coordinating on a strategy to get some wells operating with generators, however the distribution is a major issue. To get the Isley wellfield up and running, it would tank a 1 Megawatt generator and fuel tank and supply, however, that could supply ¼ of the island with water. LauLau Bay (a golf course) has offered water from one of their wells, however this water is saline and not treated, and would need to be boiled. DEQ is working with LauLau Bay on the feasibility of this.

DEQ has recommended to CUC to issue a Boil Water Notice island wide.

Drinking Water:

There are 14 bottled water companies on Saipan. 10 of those (mostly smaller companies) use CUC water, have no backup generators and no capability to supply drinking water. There are 4 water companies with their own wells: One (Aqua Water in San Antonio) has no generator and therefore cannot operate. Another (JG Sablan) has power at their treatment and bottling plant, but not at their wells in Gualo Rai, so they cannot get water from their wells to treat. Therefore, there are 2 (larger) water companies (Star and Saipan Water and Ice) which are operating and can supply drinking water, however they are concerned about fuel for their generators. There were lines at these facilities yesterday.

With respect to concerns raised about drinking water quality, DEQ believes that as long as these two companies follow their regular protocols, there should not be an issue. DEQ could do monitoring, however their building does not have 24 hour power and therefore they cannot incubate samples. If other companies begin operation, there may be more concern with testing their operations.

Hospital:

There are reported 20-30 injured in the hospital on Saipan. The hospital has a water tank, and as of yesterday it had 200,000 gallons in it, which was thought to be enough for a few days. There is a water well near the hospital, but it does not have a pump or generator, however Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is working with Commonwealth Health Corporation (the hospital) to get a pump installed and get water some way to the hospital. Assistance with a generator at this location would be helpful.

Shelters:

Eight shelters are open, with several of these reported to be over capacity. All of the shelters have generators and water, however they are filled to over capacity (in some cases twice capacity) and have concerns about fuel for the generators.

US Coast Guard Sector Guam:

USCG Sector has 10 people in Saipan now, with an additional five from the Pacific Strike Team who were scheduled to have arrived on Guam today. Additionally, 2 IMAT (SitL and Cost Doc) and a D14 press officer are scheduled to arrive tomorrow. The primary focus of these latter arrivals is supporting EOC and port operations and security.

The Coast Guard Sector Guam has opened the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund to address the Mobil Micronesia gasoline release and the diesel fuel release from the fuel tank on Delta Wharf. The CG Sector Guam is acting as first federal official on scene and OSC for EPA. EPA is deploying 2 OSCs to Saipan. The Mobil Micronesia gasoline release is in the inland zone and thus, EPA's responsibility. Coast Guard will also address at least 3 vessels that have been damaged during the storm.

FEMA:

FEMA R9 has activated the regional response coordination center (RRCC) in Oakland on a 24 hour basis. FEMA has an incident management assist team on Saipan that is currently assessing damage and immediate needs. We anticipate that there will be a disaster declaration but none has been issued to date. We expect that individual assistance and public assistance mission assignments will be issued in the near future but we have not heard about any pending direct federal assistance mission assignments yet. FEMA has issued an MA to ESF10 to staff the RRCC.

ESF3 beginning emergency power assessments. Coordinating with CUC regarding restoration of "water pumping system", awaiting assessment list from CUC. ESF12 and ESF3 assisting with repairs and temporary power for water system.

ESF12 reported damaged power plant generators likely 3-4 weeks to return to operability. About 45% of power distribution down. Inadequate reserves of poles, no reserve transformers.

Power plant being dried out by hand using hair dryers. This is expected to be successful, since the approach was used in similar earlier incidents.

IMAT has set up power task force to address power pole and transformer needs.

Ten 125kW generators being shipped for drinking water mission. IMAT is working to get list of critical wells from CUC. Generators will be installed at these wells. ACE is concerned for the match between motors and generators.

ACE asking that WWTPs get added to list for emergency power assessments. One assessment was completed yesterday. Five more have been completed so far today. Five more expected to be completed today. ACE would like to have critical wells assessed, when specified.

Mass care:

Windshield damage assessments were done in parts of Saipan that support CNMI Governor's request for an expedited disaster declaration. Damage indicates many will be in shelters for an extended period of time.

Red Cross now has food for seven days. Anticipates getting more food and comfort supplies. 72,000 liters of bottled DW included in these supplies.

Army Corps of Engineers:

ACE, via ESF3, has approached EPA regarding providing subject matter experts for wastewater and drinking water infrastructure work.

EPA Actions:

EPA has deployed 2 OSCs to the Mobil spill and are occupying the ESF10 desk on a 24 hour operation cycle. We anticipate that in addition to the gasoline spill at Mobil Micronesia, we will need OSCs to address a multitude of infrastructure damage, such as spills from transformers, other inland pollution incidents, damage to drinking water and wastewater facilities.

In addition, EPA continues to coordinate with the Commonwealth Utility Corporation re: power plant, pipeline, water & wastewater.

Janice Witul, SPCC compliance officer is on Guam and is scheduled to be on island (Guam and Saipan) for the next two weeks, conducting SPCC inspections. If Janice can get access to Saipan, she would be in a position to conduct a preliminary needs assessment. She is also a trained safety officer.

Jennifer MacArthur, RCRA inspector, was on Saipan during the typhoon but has now departed. Prior to departure she met with CNMI DEQ staff to begin collaboration on a green waste debris management plan.

Given that the airport is open and the assumption that the media may start arriving on island, Harry Allen is going to contact OPA to request having a press officer assigned to assist with media matters relating to EPA's activities.

Media Interest:

Locally high, nationally low at present. Wildfires are getting more attention in R9.